

(Senate Resolution dated 24.07.2020 no. 12)

ATILIM UNIVERSITY
POLICY ON THE PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION BASED ON
SOCIAL GENDER, SEXUAL HARASSMENT
AND ASSAULT

I. Purposes and Targets

Atılım University (*University*) aims to enable everyone to benefit equally from research and education activities and services in a free academic environment, and achieve their academic development. For this purpose, the University undertakes the implementation of policies to prevent discrimination based on social gender, as well as sexual harassment and assault.

This Policy on the Prevention of Discrimination Based on Social Gender, Sexual Harassment and Assault (*Document*) regulates the principles and strategies with which all University components are required to comply in order to counter discrimination based on social gender, sexual harassment and assault in all activities and practices of Atılım University, in line with the goal of gender equality.

Within the scope of the purpose of this Document, it is aimed to increase the capacity of the University and University units operating in the field of gender equality, to establish effective cooperation between other units of the University and non-University institutions and organizations, to increase the quality of life for everyone on campus, and to ensure the functioning and sustainability of gender equality mechanisms at the University.

Being aware of its legal obligations, and with this Document, Atılım University determines the necessary principles for a campus environment where violence is eliminated, and adopts strategies that safeguard gender equality for its processes of prevention, protection, support and empowerment, as well as its investigation and sanction mechanisms.

The regulations in this Document are not to be interpreted in ways that prevent consensual relationships between individuals, that impose a certain understanding of morality, that limit the freedom of expression, that include all kinds of personal tensions and discomforts of a sexual nature in official processes, and that subject such situations to sanctions.

II. Scope

The principles and strategies presented in this Document apply, based on the definitions presented in the Annex, for all situations where university students and staff, as well as private individuals and business personnel working on campuses come together due to the nature of their work and education, training and social relations, without limitation of place and time. This Document covers situations that occur on University campuses and their affiliated organizations, in student dormitories and shuttle buses with which the University is in contract, and situations that are carried over to the campus or have an impact on the academic life and working environment at the campus, even when they occur outside the campus.

III. Principles

All units of the University shall always consider the principles below when implementing the strategies set out in this Document.

A. Gender Equality

Gender equality refers to equal visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation for women and men in their public and private lives in the distribution of, and access to resources, and in all areas.

Being a leading university on a national and an international scale in terms of creating equal opportunities for everyone under its wing throughout their academic and business lives, and ensuring diversity in academic life, the university is required, and indeed aims to develop and implement an effective policy that eliminates gender discrimination in all areas of the academia and ensures equality and balance between genders.

In the context of ensuring gender equality within the University; the University agrees upon the core values of equality for all, inclusion, respect for human dignity and differences; and strives to develop awareness and sensitivity regarding these values. The University adopts gender equality as an element of its corporate culture.

B. Respect for Human Dignity

This principle refers to the treatment towards the components of the University in accordance with human dignity, which forms the basis of the inherent, equal and inalienable rights of everyone, within the framework of respect for the individual rights and cultural differences of the components of the University.

C. Holistic Approach Based on Rights

This principle refers to acting within the framework of the principles of indivisibility, integrity and interdependence of human rights so that everyone may fully exercise their rights.

D. Violence Awareness

Violence awareness refers to the consciousness required to distinguish the existence of violence, to develop awareness and sensitivity regarding violence, and to combat violence. The University implements the strategies set forth in this Document with an awareness of violence, and disseminates this awareness across the campus.

In this context, it is taken into consideration that the effects and consequences of violence are not always detected concretely, that they may become evident over time or may never be evident, and in any case, it is accepted that the factors that lead to violence must be eliminated.

E. Inclusion

As the strategies presented in this Document are implemented, care is exercised to include everyone rather than actions directed towards or against a specific group; and to eliminate the factors causing gender inequality.

F. Due Diligence

The strategies presented in this Document are implemented in a way that safeguards the demands, the conditions, and the requirements of individuals subjected to social gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment and assault to prevent re-victimization, and avoiding any behavior that may harm human dignity.

The University does everything in its power to prevent any behavior contrary to this Document and, where necessary, effectively mobilizes and monitors administrative processes.

G. Trust

While implementing the strategies presented in this document, action is taken in accordance with all the principles above, in a way that does not undermine the sense of trust of those who are subjected to discrimination or violence.

IV. Strategies

The strategies presented in this Document are implemented in a way that rejects and prevents violence, power relations, disadvantages and discrimination between genders created by gender roles and behavioral patterns defined by the social and cultural norms of the society.

A. Mainstreaming Gender Equality

Gender mainstreaming refers to an approach based on determining and evaluating the consequences of any planned action for women and men in all administrative or academic processes, including legal regulations, policies and practices.

B. Raising Awareness towards Gender Equality

In order to raise awareness towards gender equality, the University undertakes activities related to the following:

1. Conducting informative studies on campus on gender equality,
2. Developing dialogs between gender and women's studies units and other units,
3. Establishing an information and archive system for mainstreaming gender equality,
4. Increasing the awareness of administrative and academic staff towards gender equality.

C. Ensuring Gender Equality in Employment and Decision-Making Mechanisms

In order to ensure gender equality in its employment and decision-making mechanisms, the University undertakes activities related to the following:

1. Taking care to ensure equal employment of men and women in administrative and academic staff, within the limits of possibilities,
2. Taking action to increase the effective participation of women in decision-making mechanisms/ processes,
3. Developing a gender-sensitive strategic plan and budget preparation approach to the extent possible,
4. Ensuring the work-life balance for all employees in terms of working conditions,
5. Supporting research and applications in the fields of gender and women's studies

D. Service Approach Sensitive to Gender Equality

In order to raise awareness towards services with gender equality in mind, the University undertakes activities related to the following:

1. Establishing equality units/ commissions, preparing equality action plans,
2. Rendering basic services on campus (transportation, housing, security, sports, infrastructure systems, etc.) high quality and comprehensive, taking into account the requirements of women,

3. Providing gender equality training to service providers (service personnel such as cleaning staff, cashiers in cafeterias, cooks),
4. Including the topic of gender equality into orientation programs.

E. Combating Sexual Harassment and Assault

In order to combat sexual harassment and assault, the University undertakes activities related to the following:

1. Establishing a commission affiliated with the Presidency to work effectively in combating sexual harassment and assault on campus,
2. Prohibiting gender-based discrimination, including hostile and protective sexism, at the University,
3. Following support policies to empower students who are exposed to sexual harassment and assault,
4. Conducting awareness- and consciousness-raising activities regarding violence awareness within the University,
5. Ensuring that protective and preventive measures, including existing legal solutions, are taken and exercised effectively,
6. Providing regular training to the components of the University on the prevention of sexual harassment and assault, as required,
7. Taking the necessary measures to prevent any secondary victimization of individuals as they are reporting on their situation and onwards,
8. Taking reports on sexual harassment and assault seriously, and processing the statements of reporters.

Annex - Definitions

A. Social Gender

As stated in Article 3 of the Istanbul Convention, gender refers to "the roles, behaviors, actions and qualities that are socially constructed, and deemed appropriate for everyone by a certain society".

B. Social Gender Inequality

All kinds of power relations, disadvantages and discrimination, and gender inequality created among genders through gender roles and behavioral patterns defined by the social and cultural norms of the society in which we live.

C. Discrimination Based on Social Gender

Any discourse, attitude, behavior or action that is based on biological sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or gender expression and that contains embarrassing, humiliating, degrading, threatening, exclusionary, physical, psychological or digital violence or similar features, and gender-based discrimination.

D. Private Space

Private spaces are where an individual has the opportunity to develop themselves materially and spiritually, shared only with their own consent and limited to themselves, their close circle or those with whom they share the same living spaces; and a slice of life that includes their values and personal data such as their name, surname, likeness, voice, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, family life, honor and dignity, ethnic identity, housing, communication, and personal immunity.

E. Consent

Consent is the free and conscious will that is actively reflected to the outside world with words or actions to express desire and acceptance, regarding and limited to a concrete and specific behavior, situation or attitude.

In order to accept the existence of consent, consent must be provided voluntarily as a result of the free will of the person, to be evaluated in the context of the current circumstances.

F. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes non-consensual, sexually explicit words, attitudes or other forms of behavior made without physical contact with the person. The factor that determines sexual harassment is not the intention of the perpetrator, but the effect the behavior has on the victim.

Depending on the environment and "context" in which the incident takes place, persistently repeated actions or a single action may be considered sexual harassment. "Continuity" is not a prerequisite; however, it aggravates the nature of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is divided into two categories as simple and severe harassment, depending on the intensity and nature of the acts performed. Although not limited to the following list, some examples that indicate the existence of sexual harassment are:

1. Simple Harassment

Simple harassment is the case when there are actions that do not constitute threats, blackmail or insults, but create disturbing and undesirable environments. Examples may be gossiping, making sexual jokes, making compliments, showing unusually persistent behavior to flirt, using slang words, disturbing with pornographic material, asking questions about the person's sexual life or creating gossip.

2. Severe Harassment

Severe harassment is the case when there are threats, blackmail, insults or similar actions aimed at controlling a person's behavior. Severe harassment may occur between people of equal statuses, or it may occur when a person abuses their professional or academic authority. For example, situations in which the person is explicitly told or impliedly stated that if they do not comply with a sexual proposal, they will pay for it in their student, academic or business life, or that they will receive undeserved benefits if they comply, are considered abuse.

G. Digital Harassment

Digital harassment constitutes all kinds of disturbing or controlling actions and transactions aimed at a specific person or a specific group without targeting a specific person, by making use of the possibilities of technology, regarding an information system or data in the information system related to the person or people, or using an information system as a tool.

The main digital harassment cases are, but not limited to, the following examples:

The use of technological tools and systems to intervene into the personal space of a person, to suppress, force, limit, intimidate and control the person, as well as disruptive behavior and especially actions that may be described as threats, blackmail, insults, exposure, slander and persistent pursuit,

Discriminatory, humiliating and violent behavior targeting a person or a group,

Unlawful interventions into a person's digital personal space, unlawful acquisition, use, storage or sharing of personal data,

Sexual offers and all kinds of messages,

Continuing actions through alternative means despite verbal, written, physical or digital behaviors such as blocking or deleting that indicate that the person does not consent to them,

Carrying out digital harassment behaviors through group activities.

H. Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is the violation of a person's bodily immunity through non-consensual sexual behavior. Sexual assault may occur in two forms:

Firstly, sexual assault may occur as a violation of a person's bodily immunity without sexual intercourse. Examples of this type of sexual assault include hugging, handling, caressing and touching, depending on the characteristics of the situation.

Secondly, the person's bodily immunity may be violated by through the insertion of a sexual organ or other objects into their body.

Those who help a person to engage in physical contact of a sexual nature through force, violence, intimidation and threats are also considered to have committed the act of sexual assault.

I. Sexual Abuse

Acts of sexual harassment and assault committed against individuals under the age of 18 are considered sexual abuse of children.

J. Persistent Pursuit

Following or monitoring the person physically, verbally, in writing or digitally, closely or remotely, at home, school, workplace or other forms of social life without their consent, collecting all kinds of information about them this way and using the information in a way that makes the victim feel fear or helplessness, or puts them under pressure in any way; or any attitude and behavior related to this purpose constitutes persistent pursuit.

K. Retaliation

Retaliation is implicitly or explicitly making a person's work or education life difficult for the purpose of revenge, due to the person rejecting sexual or emotional attempts or offers, or intending to complain about being harassed, or making a complaint. Retaliation is a form of sexual harassment.

L. Promise of Reward

Promise of reward is the express or implied promise of any kind of privilege that includes rewarding the person with an undeserved reward, promotion, grade or similar gains in case of a sexual or emotional behavior, or the acceptance of a such offer.

This is a form of sexual harassment.

For example, in the case of a student receiving a sexual offer; the reward promised may be an improvement on grades, academic or financial support, or exam questions; and in the case of an employee, the reward promised may be promises to provide promotions or salary increases, to ease the workload, or to shorten the working hours.